

NSC BRIEFING

25X1 10 December 1958

MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS

- I. In Iraq, Qasim has cracked down on UAR-backed plotters. Two ring-leaders *(including Rashid Ali)* arrested 8 December. Coup was set for night of 10 December.
- A. Qasim regime is allowing impression to exist that US behind the plot. Soviet, Iraqi communist and UAR propaganda also accuse the US of being responsible.
- B. Not clear yet that plot completely squelched--disaffected military elements presumably still exist and could still try something.

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- III. Internal pressures in Israel reported mounting for some kind of action against Syria in reaction to recent border shooting.
- A. Israeli spokesmen talking about the need for UN Security Council to "do something," even though they certainly do not expect UN to act effectively on their behalf.
  - B. Observers on the spot believe Israelis basically responsible for border tension since Tel Aviv persists in pushing claims to control of demilitarized zones which legally vested in UN.
  - C. Israelis carefully reporting additional, relatively minor incidents following 3 December artillery duel. This may be continued record-building in preparation for "retaliation."
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